



National Board of Directors
MEETING

February 10-11, 2006
Newark, New Jersey

ASPIRA Association, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
February, 2006

Newark, New Jersey

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 9, 2006

12:00 – 6:00pm Arrival, Newark

Friday, February 10, 2006

9:00am – 12:00pm Arrival, Newark

9:30am – 12pm Meeting, Student Affairs Committee
Meeting, Council of Presidents/Executive Directors

12:00pm – 1:00pm Lunch (all)

1:00 – 1:30pm Meeting, Executive Committee
1:30 – 5:30pm Meeting, National Board of Directors

6:00 – 8:00pm Dinner (all)

Saturday, February 11, 2006

9:00am – 12:00pm Meeting, National Board of Directors
12:00 – 1:00pm Lunch

1:00 – 4:30pm Meeting, National Board of Directors
4:30pm Adjourn

4:30 – 7:00pm Departure

ASPIRA Association, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
February, 2006

Newark, New Jersey

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – EXE, COMMITTEE	TAB 1
MINUTES, EXE. COMMITTEE (AUGUST 2005)	TAB 2
APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, BOARD MEETING	TAB 3
MINUTES, BOARD MEETING AUGUST 2005	TAB 4
TREASURER'S REPORT	TAB 5
PROPOSED AMMENDMENTS, BY-LAWS	TAB 6
PROPOSED POSITION ON IMMIGRATION	TAB 7
PRESIDENT'S REPORT	TAB 8



**ASAPIRA Association, Inc.
Washington, DC**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

February 10, 2006
Newark, New Jersey

PROPOSED AGENDA

- 1.0 * Approval of the Agenda (Tab 1)
- 2.0 * Review and approval of the Minutes of the August 2005
Executive Committee Meeting

Review and approval of the Minutes of the
August, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting (Tab 2)
- 3.0 Procedures for Amendment to the By-Laws and Election of Officers
- 4.0 New Business
- 5.0 Adjourn

* Action Items



ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Executive Committee Meeting
August 13, 2005
MINUTES

Members Present

Ms. Myrna M. Rivera, C.I.M.A.
Chair of the Board

Ms. Helga Umpierre, Vice Chair
Personnel, Chairperson
ASPIRA, Inc. de Puerto Rico

Ms. Sonia Sánchez, Secretary,
Chairperson, ASPIRA Inc., of Illinois

Ms. Miream Sierra,
Treasurer
Chairperson, ASPIRA Inc., of Florida

Mr. Carlos J. Alma, Chairperson,
ASPIRA Inc. of New Jersey

Mr. Benny Omar Torres, Chairperson,
ASPIRA of Connecticut

Ms. Magda Yrizarry, Chairperson
ASPIRA, Inc. of New York

Ms. Ellen Espaillat, Chair,
Student Affairs Committee

Guest

Mr. Luis Cuevas, At-Large Member

Excused

Ms. Kelly Rodriguez
Past Chair, Student Affairs Committee

Ms. Rafaela Colón, Chairperson,
ASPIRA Inc., of Pennsylvania

National Office Staff

Mr. Ronald Blackburn-Moreno,
President and CEO
National Office

Mr. John Villamil, Executive
Vice President and CIO

Ms. Hilda Crespo, Vice President Public
Policy and Federal Relations

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1.0 Approval of the Agenda

- Ms. M. Rivera welcomed Executive Committee Members.
- Ms. M. Rivera asked the members to review the Executive Committee agenda.
- Ms. G. Rivera presented a motion to approve the agenda.
- Mr. S. Sánchez seconded
- The agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

2.0 Review and Approval of the Minutes of the January 21, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting

- Ms. M. Rivera the members to review the minutes of the January 21, 2005 meeting since they had not been considered by the committee in their May conference call meeting.

- Minor corrections were made to the minutes.
- Mr. G. Rivera made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.
- Mr. M. Sierra seconded.
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

3.0 Review and Approval of the Minutes of the May 20, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting

- Ms. M. Rivera asked Executive Committee members to review the minutes.
- Minor corrections were made to the minutes.
- Mr. M. Yrizarry made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.
- Ms. H. Umpierre seconded.
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

4.0 Procedures for Election of Officers and At-Large Members

- Ms. M. Rivera initiated a discussion on the procedures for elections of Officers and At-Large Members.
- Mr. R. Blackburn explained that the Nominations Committee had completed its report and made it available to Board Members. It recommended that the By-Laws be amended if necessary, so that if a chair was elected among the chairs of the local boards, they would not have to resign their local board seats.
- Ms. S. Sánchez suggested presenting and discussing the report during the National Board of Directors meeting.
- Ms. H. Umpierre explained the history of National Board representation and election procedures. She indicated that many years ago, there were two board members, plus a student representative from each Associate, on the National Board. Therefore, it did not affect the Associate as much if one of its representatives was elected national chair and resigned from the local board. This is no longer the case, since there is only one board representative (plus a student) from each Associate. The reluctance of a local chair to resign for his/her local Associates is why it has been so difficult to elect a chair among the active board chairs.
- Mr. R. Blackburn indicated that if a National Board Member is elected as Chair of the National Board he/she could not serve on a local ASPIRA board because there could be a potential conflict of interest.
- Ms. S. Sánchez indicated that the National Board very rarely votes on items that affect the Associates at the local level. She indicated that it is not clear when a conflict of interest would arise.
- Ms. M. Sierra indicated that she does not see a conflict of interest since the local ASPIRA local Boards have their own By-Laws and the National Board has no direct authority over them.
- Ms. M. Yrizarry indicated that members have the responsibility of representing their Associates on the National Board, but they also have a collective responsibility when voting at the national level.

- Ms S Sánchez indicated that on other Boards, the Chairperson does not vote nor enters into the board's discussions unless it is to clarify issues, hence limiting potential conflict of interest
- Ms Rivera indicated that the discussion should be held at the board meeting

5.0 New Business

- Ms M Rivera asked anyone had any new business to present during the National Board of Directors meeting
- No new business items were presented.

6.0 Adjourn

- Ms M Rivera asked for a motion to adjourn.
- Mr L. Cuevas presented a motion to adjourn
- Ms S Sánchez seconded
- The meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.

D I S C L A I M E R

This is to certify that the attached description of the ASPIRA Executive Committee Meeting was held as herein appears, is a true and accurate record of the meeting. The final transcript after editing, redacting and revision as produced and made available to Board Members is not necessarily a verbatim transcript of all proceedings and presentations, although reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the content provided

Javola Donato-Galindo
Transcriber





ASAPIRA Association, Inc.
Washington, DC

NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

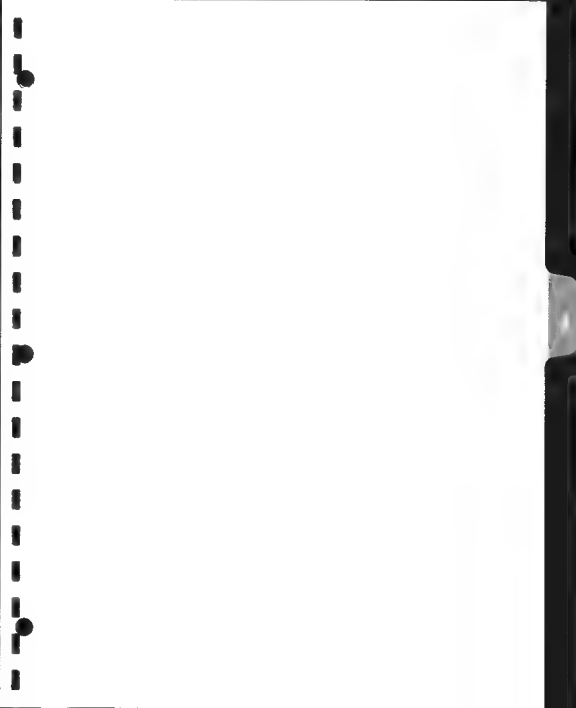
February 10-11, 2006

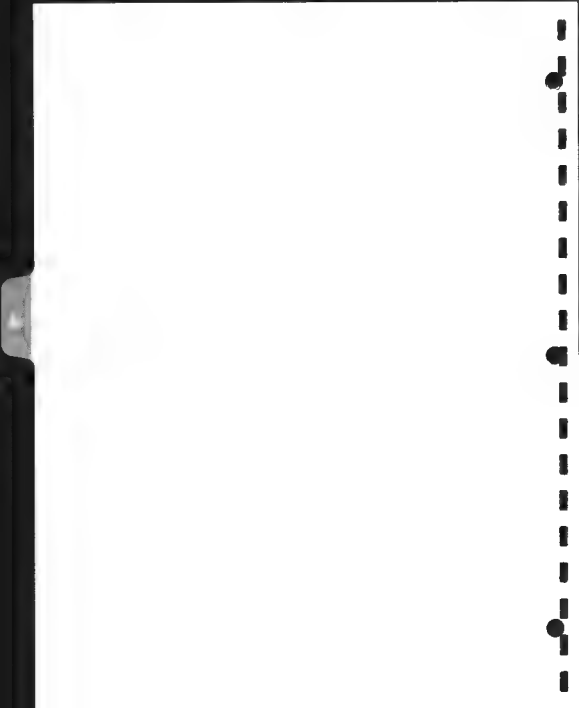
Newark, New Jersey

PROPOSED AGENDA

- 1 0 * Approval of the Agenda (Tab 3)
- 2 0 * Review and approval of the Minutes of the
Board of Directors February, 2005 meeting (Tab 4)
- 3 0 Chairperson's Report
- 4 0 Reports of Associates
- 5 0 Treasurer's Report- (Tab 5)
- * Approval of the FY 06 Final Budget
- * Auditors Report FY 2005
- Revenue and Expenditures Report December, 2005
- Endowment Fund Report
- 6 0 * Proposed Amendment to the By-Laws (Tab 6)
- 7 0 * Report of the Nominations Committee and Election of Officers
- 8 0 * Proposed Position on Immigration (Tab 7)
- 9 0 Report, Student Affairs Committee
- 10 0 President's Report (Tab 8)
- 11 0 New Business
- 12 0 Adjourn

* Action Items





ASPIRA Association, Inc
National Board of Directors Meeting
August 13, 2005
MINUTES

Members Present

Ms Myrna M Rivera, C I M A
Chair of the Board

Ms Helga Umpierre,
Vice Chair Personnel, Chairperson
ASPIRA Inc., de Puerto Rico

Ms Sonia Sánchez, Secretary,
Chairperson, ASPIRA Inc , of Illinois

Ms Miream Sierra, Treasurer,
Chairperson
ASPIRA Inc , of Florida

Mr Benny Omar Torres, Chairperson,
ASPIRA Inc , of Connecticut

Mr. Carlos J Alina, Chairperson,
ASPIRA Inc of New Jersey

Ms Magda Ynzarry, Chairperson
ASPIRA. Inc. of New York

Mr. Luis Cuevas, At Large Member

Student Representatives

Mr Max A Knowles,
Student Representative,
ASPIRA Inc , of Florida

Ms. Gabriela Sánchez,
Student Representative
ASPIRA Inc., de Puerto Rico

Ms Ellen Espallat,
Student Representative,
ASPIRA Inc , of Pennsylvania

Ms. Jessica Rodríguez
Student Representative,
ASPIRA Inc , of Illinois

Mr Héctor Artiles,
Student Representative,
ASPIRA Inc , of New York

Associates Offices

Mr Ronald Blackburn Moreno,
President and CEO, National Office

Mr Raúl Martínez
ASPIRA Inc , of Florida

Mr William Gómez (representing
Ms Hilda V Maldonado, Executive
Director, ASPIRA Inc , de Puerto Rico)

National Office Staff

Mr Ronald Blackburn Moreno,
President and CEO
National Office

Mr John Villamil, Executive
Vice President and CIO

Ms Hilda Crespo
Vice President Public Policy and Federal
Relations

Excused

Mr. Henberto Oquendo, Jr.,
At-Large Member

Ms. Rafaela Colón, Chairperson
ASPIRA Inc., of Pennsylvania

Mr. Adam García,
Student Representative
ASPIRA Inc., of New Jersey

Ms. Brunella Rodríguez,
Student Representative,
ASPIRA Inc., of Connecticut

Mr. Vincent Siberón,
Executive Director
ASPIRA Inc., of Connecticut

Mr. Alfredo Calderón,
Executive Director
ASPIRA Inc., of Pennsylvania

Mr. José Rodríguez, Executive Director
ASPIRA Inc., of Illinois

Mr. Iván Quervallú,
Executive Director,
ASPIRA Inc., of New Jersey

Mr. Héctor Gesualdo,
Executive Director
ASPIRA Inc., of New York

Ms. Hilda V. Maldonado,
Executive Director,
ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico

Call to Order: The Chair, Ms. M. Rivera called the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

1.0 Approval of the Agenda

- Ms. M. Rivera welcomed Board Members
- Ms. M. Rivera asked National Board of Directors Members to introduce themselves
- Ms. M. Rivera called for a review of the proposed agenda
- Ms. S. Sánchez made a motion to approve the agenda
- Mr. L. Cuevas seconded
- The agenda was approved by unanimous vote

2.0 Review and Approval of the Minutes of the January 21, 2005 National Board of Directors Meeting

- Ms. M. Rivera asked Board Members to review the minutes
- Several corrections were made to the minutes that were noted by the recorder
- Ms. M. Sierra made a motion to approve the minutes
- Mr. L. Cuevas seconded
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote

3.0 Chairperson's Report

- The Chairperson's report was received and entered into the record

4.0 Treasurer's Report

- Ms. M. Rivera presented and explained the Endowment Fund Report
- Mr. R. Blackburn presented and explained the two proposals from firms to conduct the audit for FY 2005
- Ms. M. Sierra presented a motion to approve NikoPat and Associates, CPA, as the Auditors
- Mr. C. Alma seconded the motion
- Members agreed that efforts should be made to seek proposals from Hispanic CPA firms
- Ms. S. Sánchez made an amendment to the motion to make the hiring of the firm contingent on positive responses from the references of the Auditors
- Mr. C. Alma seconded the amended motion
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote
- Mr. R. Blackburn presented and explained the Revenues and Expenses Report for July 2004 through June 2005 (unaudited)
- Mr. Blackburn requested from the Chair a motion to approve a continuing resolution regarding the budget for FY 06 to operate under the current FY 05 budget until a final budget could be brought to the board

- Ms. M. Sierra made a motion to approve the continuing resolution
- Mr. C. Alma seconded
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote

5.0 Proposed Amendments to the Articles of Association: Aspirante Alumni Fellowship

- Ms. M. Rivera presented the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association to include a new category of membership to incorporate the Aspirante Alumni Fellowship into the Association
- Ms. M. Rivera explained the events surrounding the creation of the Aspirante Alumni Fellowship (AAF) and the nature of the proposal to amend the By-Laws so that the Fellowship could be included within the formal ASPIRA organization
- Ms. M. Rivera reviewed the proposed amendments included in Tab 6. She asked Board members to review the suggested amendments, specifically those related to Section VI
- Mr. R. Blackburn read Section VI of the Articles of Association. He indicated that the main point of the proposed amendment is to create a new category of membership in the Association. Different from an ASPIRA Associate/Affiliate, the AAF does not deliver programs, therefore does not qualify as an affiliate or associate as currently defined, which are the only two categories of membership. A new membership category is proposed, creating an affiliate category, but that, different from other affiliates, cannot become an Associate, since it does not deliver programs.
- Ms. M. Rivera made several clarifications regarding the language of the proposed amendments.
- Ms. M. Yrizarry stated that the language used in page 11, first paragraph, is confusing. An affiliate could be incorporated in one state and operate in the state of another Associate.
- Ms. M. Rivera explained that the National Board may authorize an affiliate to incorporate with a variation of the name ASPIRA.
- Ms. M. Sierra raised a point for clarification. She indicated that if, for example, the National Board decides to approve a scholarship fund organization as an affiliate and it operated in the state of Florida, what authority would the local board of ASPIRA of Florida have?
- The meeting recessed for lunch.

The National Board reconvened at 1:15 pm

- Mr. W. Gomez suggested that rather than using the word Affiliate other term must be sought
- Mr. J. Villamil suggested the terms Member or Partner
- Ms. M. Rivera indicated that there would be no consensus regarding this issue and that it should be discussed further at the next meeting.

6.0 Report of the Nominations Committee and Election of Officers and At-Large Members

- Ms. Rivera summarized the discussion in the Executive Committee regarding the amendment to the By-Laws to allow a chair of an Associate to become National Chair without having to resign as chair of his/her local board.
- Mr. Blackburn clarified that a 30 day notice period was required to amend the By Laws and hence, they could not be amended at this meeting, but would have to be amended in the February meeting. He suggested that the election of officers be postponed until February so that the proposed amendment could be considered by the board prior to the election.
- Ms. Rivera indicated that she would be willing to remain chair until the next meeting, when elections would take place.
- The board agreed to postpone the elections until after the amendment was considered in February.
- Ms. Rivera indicated that two candidates had been presented to occupy At Large positions on the National Board: Ms. Sara Meléndez and Ms. Man-Carmen Aponte. She asked Mr. Blackburn to provide a background on each candidate.
- Mr. Blackburn indicated that the resumes of both candidates were in the board book. He went on to describe their stellar credentials, long history in, and commitment to, the Puerto Rican and Hispanic community, and their long standing ties with ASPIRA.
- Ms. Rivera asked that the candidates be elected.
- Ms. Sánchez proposed a motion to elect the candidates.
- Ms. Umperre seconded.
- The candidates were elected by unanimous vote.

7.0 Report of Student Affairs Committee

- The Student Affairs Committee presented a brief report of their meeting.

8.0 President's Report

- The President's Report contained in the Board Book was received and entered into the record.

10.0 Adjourn

- Ms. M. Sierra presented a motion to adjourn.
- Mr. B. Torres seconded the motion.
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

- The National Board of Directors meeting was adjourned

D I S C L A I M E R

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Faviola Donato-Galindo
Transcriber



ASPIRA ASSOCIATION, INC.
National Office
For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2006
PROPOSED BUDGET



January, 2006

	FY 06 Proposed Budget	FY 05 Final Budget	Difference
Support & Revenue			
Contributions and grants	1,001,845	1,191,822	(189,777)
Federal Grants	492,352	301,694	190,658
Interest Income	2,000	5,000	(3,000)
Misc. Income	245,291	285,090	(42,799)
Total	1,741,488	1,786,406	(44,918)
EXPENSES			
Salaries	620,938	572,636	48,302
Fringe	130,397	120,254	10,143
Bank Charges	500	500	0
Board Expenses	30,000	20,000	10,000
Contractual	246,227	209,300	36,927
Legal Fees	500	500	0
Audit Fees	11,000	11,000	0
Equipment Purchase and Maint	12,000	26,239	(14,239)
Insurance	7,825	7,500	325
Office Supplies	4,559	5,664	(1,105)
Program Supplies	6,005	18,836	(12,831)
Postage	2,513	4,020	(1,507)
Printing	9,804	14,600	(4,796)
Rent	166,650	160,000	6,650
Seminars/meetings	141,835	183,389	(41,554)
Stipends	-	500	(500)
Telephone/Internet	7,684	7,725	(41)
Travel	20,493	35,541	(15,048)
Interest Expense	3,000	3,000	0
Special Events	15,000	45,000	(30,000)
Reserve	49,000	4,352	44,648
TOTAL	1,485,930	1,450,555	35,375
Transfers	255,558	335,850	(80,292)
Balance	1,741,488	1,786,405	(44,918)

ASPIRA ASSOCIATION, INC.
REVENUES AND EXPENSES REPORT
FOR JULY 2005 THROUGH DEC 2005
(UNAUDITED)



	Modified Accrual Year to Date Actual	FY 05 Final Budget*	Budget Balance	% of Budget Remaining
Support & Revenue				
Contributions and grants	568,347	1,191,622	\$ 625,275	52%
Federal Grants	131,283	301,694	\$ 170,411	56%
Interest Income	1,692	5,000	\$ 3,308	66%
Misc. Income/ G. Operating	146,310	288,090	\$ 141,790	48%
Total	845,632	1,786,406	940,774	53%
EXPENSES				
Salaries	306,737	572,636	265,899	46%
Fringe	64,415	120,254	55,839	46%
Bank Charges	103	500	398	80%
Board Expenses	25,899	20,000	(5,899)	29%
Consultants/Temporary Help	169,923	209,300	39,377	19%
Legal Fees	0	500	500	100%
Audit Fees	5,000	11,000	6,000	55%
Equipment Purchase and Maint	9,865	26,239	16,374	62%
Insurance	7,044	7,500	456	6%
Office Supplies	1,229	5,664	4,435	78%
Program Supplies	1,823	18,836	17,013	90%
Postage/Delivery	894	4,020	3,326	83%
Printing & Publications	1,909	14,800	12,691	87%
Rent	86,724	160,000	73,276	46%
Seminars/Meetings/Subscription	97,560	183,389	85,829	47%
Stipends	0	500	500	0%
Telephone/Internet	5,640	7,725	2,085	27%
Travel/Lodging & Per Diem	9,987	35,541	25,554	72%
Interest Expense	2,673	3,000	327	11%
Spectra. Events G.O.	12,017	45,000	32,983	73%
Reserve	0	4,352	4,352	100%
Total Expenses	809,234	1,450,556	641,322	44%
Transfers	35,050	335,850	300,800	90%
TOTAL	844,284	1,786,406	942,122	53%
REVENUES (UNDER) EXPENSES	1,349			

* Operating under continuing resolution

ASPIRA ASSOCIATION, INC.
READER'S DIGEST ENDOWMENT FUND

JULY 2002**	907,012
AUGUST 2002**	915,519
SEPTEMBER 2002**	856,511
OCTOBER 2002**	889,680
NOVEMBER 2002**	916,767
DECEMBER 2002**	896,477
JUNE 2003**	917,418
JULY 2003	920,028
AUGUST 2003	934,264
SEPTEMBER 2003**	935,045
OCTOBER 2003	967,806
NOVEMBER 2003	977,702
DECEMBER 2003**	1,019,928
JANUARY 2004**	1,022,602
FEBRUARY 2004**	1,038,067
MARCH 2004**	1,027,716
APRIL 2004**	1,010,869
MAY 2004**	1,014,165
JUNE 2004**	1,028,812
JULY 2004**	1,001,252
AUGUST 2004	990,250
SEPTEMBER 2004**	1,002,125
OCTOBER 2004	1,011,330
NOVEMBER 2004	1,034,504
DECEMBER 2004**	1,065,936
JANUARY 2005**	1,042,656
FEBRUARY 2005**	1,063,631
MARCH 2005**	1,047,933
APRIL 2005**	975,070
MAY 2005**	997,918
JUNE 2005**	1,002,150
JULY 2005	1,022,979
AUGUST 2005	1,024,594
SEPTEMBER 2005	1,031,028
OCTOBER 2005	1,012,184
NOVEMBER 2005	1,077,088
DECEMBER 2005**	1,044,470

** Includes \$40,523.09 Margin on Line of Credit as of December 2005

Total Current Value net of margin (12/2005) = \$ 1,044,431.00





Memorandum

To: National Board of Directors

From: Ronald Blackburn Moreno

Date: January 3, 2006

Re: Proposed Amendment to the ASPIRA Association By-Laws - Background

As you are aware, the By-Laws of the ASPIRA Association currently require that in the event the Chairperson is selected among the representatives of any Associate, that he/she resign that position and become an "at-large" member of the national Board. The Associate would then elect another representative to the board.

The rationale for this requirement is to avoid potential conflict of interest (that is, having the National Chair also representing -and/or chairing- a local Associate)

In the board's discussions over several meetings, members felt that this requirement was an unnecessary burden. They felt that the requirement limited the number of candidates who would actually accept the position of Chair because they did not want to relinquish their position as a representative (or chair) of their local Associate board. This had happened at several elections over the past years

At the last board meeting in August, 2005, two agreements were reached by the board

- 1 To propose an amendment to the By-Laws that would eliminate this requirement, and
- 2 To postpone the election of officers from August until February, so that the By-Laws question could be resolved first

The proposed amendment stated "To delete the following paragraph from the Association By-Laws" (which is found on Page 4)

"In the event the Chairperson of the National Board is chosen from the representatives of any Associate, he/she shall resign that position as a representative of his/her Associate on the National Board and shall occupy the position of At-Large Director while he/she remains Chairperson. Under those circumstances, his/her Associate shall be entitled to elect another representative to the National Board."



ASPIRA Association, Inc.

BY-LAWS

* Approved January 1992

** Amended January 1993

*** Amended August 1997

**** Amended March 1999

7/27/99

ASPIRA ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

OFFICES

The principal office of the Association shall be in Washington, D C The Association may also have offices at such other places as the National Board of Directors may from time to time designate.

ARTICLE II

DIRECTORS

Section 1 Number The property, business and affairs of the Association shall be managed and controlled by the National Board of Directors. Each Associate shall be entitled to be represented by two (2) Directors on the National Board. Should a Director representing an Associate/Affiliate be removed from the National Board for cause, that ASPIRA Associate/Affiliate can elect among the members of its board, a representative to the National Board of Directors. The directors on the National Board of Directors shall consist of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the ASPIRA Associate, except as set forth above, and one representative who is a student between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-five (25) (or between the ages of twenty one (21) and twenty eight (28) years of age in those states and Puerto Rico where legal age of majority is 21, though this student must be a member of the Associate/Affiliate Board of Directors and has received, or is, receiving ASPIRA services), who is duly qualified to serve as,

and is a member of, the ASPIRA Associate's Board of Directors. All Directors must be at least sixteen (16) years of age and must also qualify as a director of their ASPIRA Associate pursuant to relevant local statutes.

The National Board of Directors may, by a majority vote of its members, include representation, with or without vote, of an ASPIRA Affiliate on the National Board of Directors. In the event the National Board of Directors votes to include representation from an Affiliate, the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Affiliate and a student who meets the qualifications set forth for student representatives above, would become directors of the National Board of Directors.

Section 2 At-Large-Members and Their Terms. In addition to the directors chosen in accordance with Section 1 above, the National Board will have seven At-Large directors. Three At-Large Directors will be chosen under the circumstance enumerated below in this Section, being the Chairperson of the National Board of Directors, the Immediate Past Chairperson of the National Board, and the Immediate Past Chairperson of the Student Affairs Committee. Four At-Large Directors will be elected by a majority vote of the National Board of Directors at the regular annual meeting of the National Board of Directors. The four elected At-Large directors shall have fixed terms of 2 years and can be reelected for one additional, fixed, consecutive two-year term, except when filling a vacant At-Large position under circumstances described in section 3, below. The elected At-Large Directors shall be selected by a majority vote of the National Directors elected by the Associates prior to the selection of officers of the National Board. The terms of the elected At-Large Directors will be staggered. No more than two elected At-Large directors will be elected in any year. There shall not be more than two of the seven At-Large members from any geographical area served by any Associate. At-Large Directors shall not be members of any Associate or Affiliate.

ASPIRA Board of Directors during the time they are serving as Directors of the ASPIRA Association, Inc.

~~In the event the Chairperson of the National Board is chosen from the representatives of any Associate, he/she shall resign that position as a representative of his/her Associate on the National Board and shall occupy the position of At-Large Director while he/she remains Chairperson. Under these circumstances, his/her Associate shall be entitled to elect another representative to the National Board.~~

Further, in the event the Chairperson of the National Board is not a representative of any Associate, an At-Large Director shall be elected by the National Board for one year

Further, in the event the Chairperson of the Board of the ASPIRA Association, Inc. during the twelve months following the end of his/her term as that Chairperson, does not otherwise remain a member of the ASPIRA National Board of Directors, he/she shall remain a member of the National Board of Directors of the ASPIRA Association, Inc. for an additional twelve months as an At-Large Director (as Immediate Past Chairperson) unless he/she was terminated for cause from his/her position as Chairperson of the ASPIRA Association

Section 3 Vacancies In case any vacancy on the National Board of Directors shall occur through death, resignation, disqualification, incapacity, or any other cause, the vacancy shall be filled by the Board of Directors of the Associate or Affiliate represented by any such member on the National Board creating the vacancy for the unexpired portion of the term at any annual meeting, regular meeting, or special meeting held for that purpose. In the case of a vacancy of any position of an At-Large member on the National Board, such vacancy shall be filled, for the unexpired portion of the term, by a majority vote of the Directors on the National Board

Section 4 Effect of Death, Resignation, or Removal All rights, powers, privileges and responsibilities of any Board member shall cease upon his/her death, resignation, or removal

ARTICLE III

MEETINGS

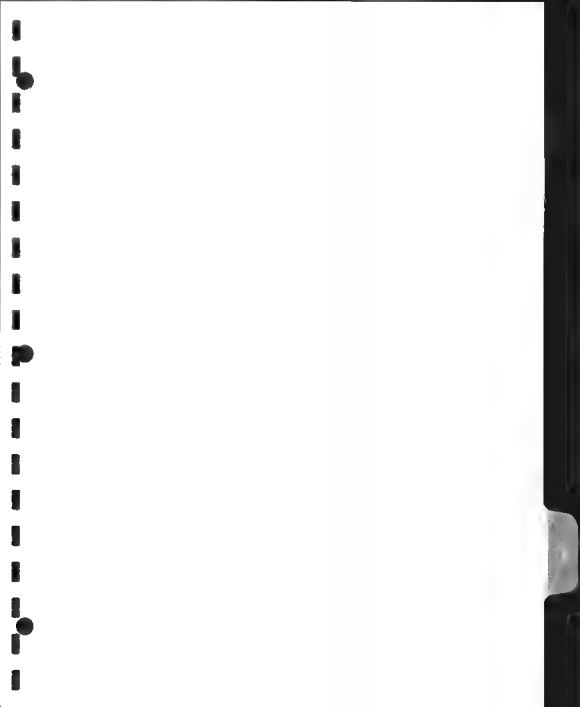
Section 1 Annual Meeting There shall be an Annual Meeting held between June 1 and August 31 when a report will be rendered by the National Executive Director of the past year's activities, elections of At-Large members will be held and vacancies, if any, will be filled on the National Board of Directors. Elections of officers of the National Board of Directors shall also take place at the Annual Meeting.

Section 2 Place of Meeting Meetings of the National Board of Directors of the Association, are to be held at its principal office, or at such other place as may be designated by the National Board of Directors.

Section 3 Meetings Meetings of the National Board of Directors shall be held at least two (2) times a year.

Section 4 Notice of Meeting Meetings of the National Board of Directors may be held upon written notice to each Director not less than five (5) days nor more than twenty (20) days before such meeting.

Section 5 Voting At all meetings of the National Board of Directors each Director shall have one (1) vote, and, except as otherwise provided by these By-Laws, by statute, or by Robert's Rules of Order, the act of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the National Board of Directors. Voting by means of a proxy shall be







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PROPOSED POLICY POSITION

IMMIGRATION

By:
Ronald Blackburn-Moreno
President

INTRODUCTION

ASPIRA can no longer remain on the sidelines on the issue of immigration. As a Puerto Rican organization, and because Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, ASPIRA has never felt particularly compelled to address this issue or be an active participant in this debate. Immigration and immigration policy, however, are not only critical issues for many Hispanic organizations and Hispanics generally, but that they have become equally critical to ASPIRA. It is proposed here that ASPIRA not only take a strong position on immigration, but that as an advocacy organization, it become an active participant and strong advocate, alongside other national Hispanic organizations, in the growing and increasingly polarizing national debate on this issue.

WHY SHOULD ASPIRA BECOME INVOLVED?

There are basically three reasons why ASPIRA should become actively involved in the debate over immigration:

1. The issue of illegal immigration is not about the loss of jobs or the drain that illegal immigrants place on national, state and local resources, as the far- and not so far- right have framed it. It is really about Hispanics. It is about ethnicity and about race. The rhetoric and backlash against undocumented immigrants is, to a large degree, a backlash against the Hispanic community generally. It stems not from any concern for the law, but from the perceived threat that many Americans see in the increasing political and economic power of Hispanics in this country.

This backlash is - or soon will be - affecting every Hispanic regardless of whether they are citizens, documented immigrants or undocumented immigrants. It is already affecting - or will soon affect - every Hispanic community. The recent case of the young student suspended from school just for speaking Spanish is just a recent example. And it can become explosive, as can be seen with the vigilantes on the southwest border and scandalous bill just passed by the House of

Representatives that would, among others, empower local police to enforce immigration laws. This racist backlash is already -- or soon will be -- affecting our own communities, even Puerto Rican communities and communities in which Puerto Ricans live side-by-side with other Hispanics.

ASPIRA must stand up to what is basically racism against Hispanics and potential violations of civil rights, just as it fought racism against Puerto Ricans in the 1960's and 1970's.

- 2 Our communities, and hence ASPIRA, are changing dramatically. Though ASPIRA remains a Puerto Rican organization, there are thousands of youth and families that ASPIRA serves every year that are not Puerto Rican, and an increasing number of these are undocumented. In Chicago, a growing number are Mexicans, in New York, an increasing number are Dominicans, and in Florida the majority of those we serve are not Puerto Rican and many are in the U.S. illegally.

It is imperative that ASPIRA be in position to advocate for these students and their families as well, again, in the same way that we have advocated for Puerto Rican students and families and fought racism against Puerto Ricans for over forty years.

- 3 As a national advocacy organization, and one of the most prominent among the national Hispanic organizations, ASPIRA has a responsibility to support its sister organizations on issues on which we agree and that are as critical to their constituencies. In this case, we have an obligation to assume strong leadership and support organizations that are addressing immigration, in the same way that they continue to support ASPIRA on a host of issues around education and youth. Solidarity, mutual support and unity have been critically important to establishing and maintaining coalitions of Hispanic organizations, which have been so successful. And there is no more important issue for many of these organizations than immigration.

ASPIRA's PROPOSED POSITION ON IMMIGRATION

The following positions set the general framework for ASPIRA's overall position on immigration and provide the general direction of ASPIRA's efforts with regards to this issue.

- 1 ASPIRA does not support illegal immigration.
- 2 ASPIRA recognizes, however, that there are over 11 million undocumented Hispanic immigrants in the United States, mostly Mexican and Central American and that, as a practical and moral matter, the status of this population must be addressed. Deportation of these immigrants is neither feasible nor desirable.

- 3 ASPIRA supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes provisions to create pathways to legal status and citizenship for undocumented immigrants, especially for the 11 million already in the country
- 4 ASPIRA rejects any "guest worker" program that, as has been proposed, does not include provisions for, or pathways to, permanent legal status for workers and their families, but that actually only create a pathway to deportation
- 5 Within the context of immigration reform, ASPIRA supports the reunification of families of undocumented immigrants
- 6 ASPIRA rejects the "militarization" of the border and extreme measures to curtail illegal immigration that may threaten human rights or the lives of undocumented immigrants. It also rejects the use of state, local or other law enforcement to enforce immigration laws and any violation, by any party, of the human rights or abuses of undocumented immigrants. Immigration laws should be enforced by the Department of Homeland Security
- 7 ASPIRA rejects the actions of civilian groups, such as the "minutemen" and others, that are actually vigilante groups attempting to take the law into their own hands in their attempts to prevent illegal immigration or to inform law enforcement
- 8 ASPIRA supports reform of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service that will help expedite and make more flexible requests for legal status rather than just increasing border patrols
- 9 ASPIRA supports strict enforcement of applicable existing laws and or new legislation to protect undocumented immigrants from employer abuse
- 10 ASPIRA rejects attempts to bar automatic citizenship to any person born on U.S. soil of undocumented parents
- 11 ASPIRA supports the "Dream Act" that allows children of undocumented parents to qualify for financial aid to go on to college
- 12 ASPIRA rejects any attempts to prevent children of undocumented parents in the United States from attending school and obtaining a K-12 education. It supports school policies that include undocumented children in the school culture and climate, including policies that allow children to speak in their home language in school and reflect their cultural heritage in the classroom







PROGRESS REPORT

to the

National Board of Directors

of the
ASPIRA Association
by

Ronald Blackburn Moreno
President

February 2006

INTRODUCTION

This Progress Report covers the activities of the National Office in the months between August, 2005 and January 2006. The last report to the Board of Directors was presented at the meeting of the Board of Directors in August, 2005.

Highlights

The last six months have been highly productive for the National Office and the Associates. A significant effort by ASPIRA of PA and ASPIRA of IL was made in expanding the number of schools these two Associates operate. These efforts should result in the opening of at least two and possibly three new ASPIRA schools. Efforts during this period have been dedicated mainly to:

- a) Conducting, together with the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), the highly successful *Technology Tools for Instruction and Management* in Puerto Rico with attendance of over 500 and the participation of the Minister of Education of Spain, María Jesús Sansegundo,
- b) Developing a broad based, non-partisan public/private sector coalition in Puerto Rico in support of the ASPIRA *Conectando a Puerto Rico* initiative and working with the four key groups on the Island in developing a comprehensive model,
- c) Developing a host of projects with ASPIRA de Puerto Rico for the **Puerto Rico Department of Education**,

- d) Conducting the first ever, two-day **Council of Executive Directors Retreat** in New York City, and developing the concept for creating an Education Management Organization (EMO) for ASPIRA.
- e) Initiating a series of grants, including a \$390,000 award under ASPIRA's Cooperative Agreement with the **Office of Minority Health**, and three grants with the **National Highway Safety Administration (NHSTA)** and **NHTSA DC**; along with new grants from the **Verizon Foundation** (literacy and technology literacy), **Citibank** (Home Ownership) and **Pitney Bowes** (ASPIRA of CT).
- f) Providing extensive on-going **technical assistance and training to the Associates** in technology (e.g., networks, operations, training), including visits to Associates to provide on-site technology upgrades and training.
- g) Providing Associates with other **technical assistance**, including a ASPIRA Council training at ASPIRA of Florida, training on financial education and home ownership, training of teachers and staff at ASPIRA of Connecticut on the **MAS Academy** being implemented in Bridgeport through a new grant from the Pitney Bowes Foundation.
- h) Negotiating support for a series of programs in technology with various tech company partners, including Oracle, Microsoft, and Hewlett Packard
- i) Informing members of Congress regarding the **TRIO programs** that are up for reauthorization together with the Council for Opportunity in Education (language and appropriations) and working on **telecommunications** policy around the issue of video cable deployment by the telephone companies.
- j) Providing support for the establishment of **ASPIRA of Delaware**, including support in administering a grant by MBNA to further develop their youth programs.
- k) Serving as the lead organization in the **National Hispanic Leadership Agenda** (ASPIRA is Chair), in the release of the **NHLA Congressional Scorecard** and an **NHLA retreat** in Atlanta, and in launching a federal Hispanic employment initiative.
- l) Serving as Chair of the Search Committee of the **Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility** in their search for a new President and CEO, and participating in a host of corporate visits, such as the annual visit to General Motors.
- m) Participating in a host of **conferences and meetings** of national organizations, such as the **NCLR Conference** in Philadelphia, the **Office of Minority Health conference on Health Care Disparities**, the **National Hispanic Corporate Council conference**, the **National Association of Hispanic Publications Policy Summit**, the **Center for the Book conference** and others.
- n) Hosting the board meeting of **Somos Telecentros** in San Juan.
- o) Continuing conversations with a group of community leaders to establish an **ASPIRA in Rhode Island**.
- p) Completing the negotiation and signing of a **lease extension** for 10 years on ASPIRA's current office space and preparing for extensive remodeling of the space to enable additional subleasing to Hispanic organizations.
- q) Providing Associates with **on-going information on policy issues and grant availability**.

- r) Contracting the **audit** firm which conducted the FY 2005 audit, and

Accomplishments

Technology Tools Conference In December 2005, ASPIRA, with the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), hosted the fifth annual Tech Tools Conference in San Juan. The conference followed the also highly successful ASPIRA of NJ annual Scholarship Golf Tournament. Total registration for the conference was just over 550, including 400 teachers from the P.R. Department of Education (over 1,200 individual teachers participated).

The highlight of the Conference was the keynote address by the Minister of Education of Spain, Maria Jesús Sansegundo. In addition to the speech, Dr. Sansegundo held a meeting, sponsored by ASPIRA with the Secretary of Education of P.R., and the presidents of several universities, including the University of Puerto Rico, Sacred Heart and Universidad Metropolitana. ASPIRA hosted a reception for the minister at the P.R. Department of State in which she was officially received by the Secretary of State. ASPIRA was also represented at a luncheon for her hosted by the Governor of Puerto Rico.

In addition to the participation of the Minister, there were several high level keynote speakers, including Senator Iris Martínez of Illinois, Senator José Garriga Pico from Puerto Rico, and the Treasurer of the United States, Hon. Anna Escobedo Cabral. Other speakers included the President of the P.R. Telephone Company, and representatives from the Oracle Academy and Microsoft.

The conference featured over 50 workshops on technology and applications of technology in the classroom and in school management.

At the conference, ASPIRA hosted a meeting of *Somos Telecentros*, the international organization that ASPIRA helped found that brings together over 5,000 Community Technology Centers throughout the hemisphere (Latin America, U.S. and Canada). ASPIRA is one of the leading organizations within this coalition.

This is the second year that the National office has taken the leadership on this conference, which was initiated by ASPIRA of New Jersey. Now that ASPIRA of New Jersey has stable leadership and has resolved many of its financial issues, they have requested that, for next year, they be re-incorporated as a partner in the Tech Tools Conference. Negotiations are on going with another hotel for the conference next year, given that the El San Juan no longer has the space to accommodate the conference. Secretary of Education of Puerto Rico has committed to sending 600 teachers to the conference this year.

Conectando a Puerto Rico - This initiative took off during this period through a series of meetings with potential partners to create a broad coalition to support this

economic development/education model in Puerto Rico. Almost every important potential partner from government, universities and especially the private sector, have agreed to partner with ASPIRA and ASPIRA de P.R. on the project, including the major technology companies on the mainland. As a result of these efforts, including a broad based roundtable held by the Puerto Rico Senate, legislation was submitted in the P.R. legislature to establish a policy around technology, education and economic development and to establish a national advisory committee on technology that will include ASPIRA. Plans are well underway to sponsor an Invitational Conference on Technology, Education and Economic Development in San Juan in September, featuring top government officials from Chile who are experts in the area. In addition, plans are already underway to implement the first series of pilot projects across the Island by ASPIRA de Puerto Rico.

P.R. Department of Education A host of programs are being developed with the P.R. Department of Education. ASPIRA de P.R. was recognized by the Governor in his State of the Commonwealth address for their participation in an Island wide Read and Dream project, as part of these initiatives. Through ASPIRA intervention, Oracoe (with the Governor) announced that it would provide an e-mail address to all students and teachers in P.R. public schools. In addition, ASPIRA has been working with the Department on technology, and ASPIRA de P.R. is submitting a major proposal to train parents (APEX) in Puerto Rico's public schools. The National Office has submitted proposals as well to conduct the Second Arts Conference for arts teachers and the first Mathematics Congress for math teachers across the Island. Each is budgeted at over \$1 million. Organizing these conferences is a fund generating activity for the national office.

Council of Executive Director's Retreat – The Council held its first retreat in New York City in October. At the two-day retreat, two major priorities for the Association (both of which are in the Strategic plan) are a communications initiative and the development of an Educational Management Organization (EMO) to support ASPIRA schools across the country. The Concept Paper for an ASPIRA EMO was developed after the meeting and submitted to the Council for review. A host of other initiatives were discussed as well, mostly around national support for Associates' initiatives and better exchanges of information and expertise across the Association.

ASPIRA of Delaware ASPIRA of Delaware is moving quickly towards becoming a formal organization in that state. The leadership that is developing ASPIRA of Delaware maintains contacts with, and is working in, schools. MBNA approves a seed grant to ASPIRA of Delaware (through the National Office) to further their work in schools and to enhance their organizational capabilities. The group leadership met with the ASPIRA Executive Directors at the retreat to update them on their progress.

Working with the ASPIRA Associates

Extensive efforts were made this period to assist Associates in a host of areas. All Associates received extensive, on going, technical assistance on technology, including network maintenance. In addition all the ASPIRA Club materials from ASPIRA of NY were digitalized and disseminated to all the Associates. The entrepreneurship curriculum for the clubs was also distributed.

ASPIRA of New Jersey – Two on site technical assistance visits have been made to ASPIRA of New Jersey offices across the state to upgrade/maintain their technology and to train local resources. In the south, the network in three computer labs was completed and the staff trained. In Newark, an assessment of their technology was completed and recommendations made to the President. In addition, the staff was trained on technology and public policy issues and public advocacy, as well as on all the resources and curricula available at ASPIRA.

ASPIRA of Illinois – The National Office provides extensive remote technical assistance to ASPIRA of Illinois in its next move which is to significantly expand the number of charter schools they operate. It is expected that ASPIRA of Illinois will be operating two new schools next fall, raising its budget to almost \$20 million. ASPIRA of PA is also requesting two new charter schools, adding to the three that ASPIRA of FL already operates. ASPIRA is negotiating with Oracle to extend Oracle services to the ASPIRA of Illinois schools as part of an effort to demonstrate the effectiveness of Oracle systems in schools.

ASPIRA de Puerto Rico – ASPIRA de Puerto Rico received the most attention during this period, particularly regarding a host of programs and initiatives with the Department of Education of Puerto Rico (see above). ASPIRA de PR just signed an agreement for the Read and Dream project worth \$1.3 million over two years. The National Office has facilitated the submission of proposals to the Department and intervened with the Department on accounts payable to ASPIRA de Puerto Rico (\$1.2 million).

ASPIRA of Connecticut – A grant from the Pitney Bowes Foundation was received to establish a pilot ASPIRA Mathematics and Science Academy in two middle schools in Bridgeport. The National Office provided training to the teachers of the Academy in Bridgeport, which begins this semester. As part of the Citibank partnership, Citibank will be implementing the Financial Education and Home ownership programs in Connecticut by ASPIRA of Connecticut. A proposal is being sent to ASPIRA of CT to apply for the Supplementary Student Services Provider status so they can provide after school services to Bridgeport Public Schools. This would be a major influx of funding for ASPIRA of CT.

ASPIRA of New York – The efforts with ASPIRA of New York centered around training and implementation of the Financial Education and Home Ownership

program funded by Citibank. In addition, as with all Associates, the National office provided extensive technical assistance on technology (e.g., networks, e-mail systems).

ASPIRA of Pennsylvania – ASPIRA of PA received the curricula for the ASPIRA Clubs on entrepreneurship. It is expected that they will implement the program in the clubs. Funding is being sought to implement the financial education program in Philadelphia as well.

ASPIRA of Florida – Training was provided to the members of the ASPIRA of Florida Councils on their role at ASPIRA of Florida and issues around Board responsibilities. The purpose of the training was to strengthen their organizational capabilities with a system that has grown to be quite complex. The President also participated the building of the KaBoom Playground at the ASPIRA North school, that was secured through the partnership with The Home Depot. In addition, staff was trained on financial education and home ownership in anticipation of implementing these programs in Miami.

Information to Associates – The National Office continues to disseminate information to the Associates on public policy issues and grants available on an on-going basis. This process is facilitated by electronic communications. This has been especially true of efforts to ensure an adequate appropriation for the TRIO programs (including Talent Search) and the battle around elimination of the "prior experience" clause in the Higher Education Act that would be extremely detrimental to ASPIRA Associates.

On-Going Programs

Citibank Home Ownership – Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the pilot Home Ownership Program funded by Citibank. Trainers from ASPIRA of New York and ASPIRA of Florida have been trained and the pilots are already being planned for the summer. Planning meeting were held with Citibank in New York to finalize the pilot project.

NHTSA/General Motors – The National Office continues to work on dissemination of information on traffic safety and impaired driving under this National Highway Transportation Administration grant. ASPIRA just joined The Century Council, an organization chaired by former Congresswoman Susan Molinari that addresses the issue of impaired (drunk) driving among youth.

ASPIRA further advanced the notion of establishing the National Hispanic Coalition on Traffic Safety. A meeting was held with top General Motors Corporation officials on the idea, which we expect would be funded by NHTSA. The concept is being presented to the other two domestic car makers to create a broad-based coalition.

Verizon Foundation – Work continues on the Verizon Technology Literacy grant. A new \$250,000 grant was awarded for this year for the project. In addition to helping the National office provide technology training and technical assistance to the Associates, this grant promotes literacy and technology literacy.

Public Policy

Immigration – ASPIRA has not taken a strong position nor has traditionally taken leadership in the area of immigration policy. The National Office developed a white paper on immigration that was sent to the National Board. The paper includes the rationale for addressing this important issue and the policy positions that the National Office is recommending.

TRIO Programs – ASPIRA has been working with the Council for Opportunity in Education on the reauthorization of the TRIO programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search and Special Services, among other programs). There is a movement in Congress that remains, to by-pass the "prior experience" clause that would be detrimental to ASPIRA. ASPIRA will be working closely with COE over the next year to ensure TRIO is strengthened rather than weakened, since it is so important to our Associates. ASPIRA is also now working on the TRIO appropriation, which has been threatened in Congress.

No Child Left Behind – ASPIRA continues its policy work on the no Child Left Behind law, especially through its collaboration with the NEA and its participation in the Hispanic Education Coalition (HEC).

Telecommunications – ASPIRA has been involved in the issue of fiber optic cable deployment by the telephone companies to offer video and internet service (in addition to phone) across the country. This places the telephone companies in direct competition with the cable companies. The issue is an important one for the Hispanic community in terms both of access to services and price. We have been reviewing legislation that has been submitted to regulate the deployment with both sectors, specifically with Verizon and Comcast.

Collaborations

ASPIRA continues its strong participation in a host of collaboration with Hispanic and non-Hispanic organizations.

NHLA – ASPIRA currently chairs the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), the organization that brings together the 40 national Hispanic organizations. ASPIRA organized the release of the NHLA Congressional Scorecard at a Press Conference on July 25, 2005. The Scorecard ranks the members of Congress and the Senate on key votes that affect the Latino community. The release generated national publicity for the NHLA.

ASPIRA also organized the first meeting of the year for the NHLA for May 13 and a retreat in Atlanta, GA sponsored by the Coca Cola Company on July 28-29, 2005. The purpose of the retreat was to set priorities for the NHLA for the next two years.

HACR – The President of HACR resigned in June to accept a position in the private sector. I was selected to Chair the Search Committee for the new President and CEO. The search closed in November. Over 30 highly qualified candidates submitted applications from around the country. The Search Committee completed its initial review and submitted four finalist to the HACR Board. The decision will be made February 18, 2006 and announced shortly thereafter.

ASPIRA also participated in several corporate visits with HACR during this period.

Conferences and Meetings – ASPIRA participated in various conferences during this period, including: Office of Minority Health National Conference on Health Care Disparities (Washington, DC); the national conference of the National Hispanic Corporate Council in Chicago; the Home Depot Hispanic Leadership Summit in Atlanta; and the Center for the Book conference in Washington.

Administration

New Lease/Construction/Subleasing - The main activity in the area of administration was the negotiation of a new lease for the National Office facilities. We are pleased to inform that the lease renewal was signed, effective January 1, 2005.

ASPIRA secured the services of the EZRA Group (the same company that helped us last time – almost ten years ago). After an extensive search of available properties and our purpose to reduce the space needed by the National Office, we found that the best offer was being provided by our current landlord. The landlord proposed a renewal of the lease for ten additional years for the entire space we currently occupy at \$28.00 per foot (for 6,100 square feet), almost \$15.00 under the price in comparable spaces, either in Washington proper or in the suburbs. In addition, they will provide almost \$80,000 for renovations, which will allow the National Office to sub-divide the space for sub-leasing to other organizations.

The deal calls for \$85,000 to be given to ASPIRA for remodeling, which is expected to start March 1, 2006. The focus of the remodeling will be to divide the current space into three suites. ASPIRA will occupy one suite and the other two will be sublet. One is currently sublet to HACR. Individual offices are subleased to the Cuban American National Council and, most recently to the national GI Forum. The subleasing agreements are expected to significantly reduce the rent burden for ASPIRA (currently \$160,000 per year) to little over a third.

Audit – The audit of the National Office operations for fiscal year 2005 (2004-2005) was completed by the auditing firm. The audit and management letters will be submitted to the board at its February meeting. Preliminary discussions with the auditors indicate that the audit was a clean one and that only minor issues will be referred to in the management letter.